

STATE SENATOR • DEBORAH CHERRY • 26TH DISTRICT

Cherry Press Release

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Cherry Bill Protects Public Trust ***Makes Improper Use of School Bond Proceeds a Felony***

LANSING – State Senator Deborah Cherry (D-Burton), Thursday, scored another victory for education when the Senate passed her legislation that classifies improper use of school bond funds as a felony. Sen. Cherry’s bill, also passed in the House, establishes sentencing guidelines for the crimes of making a false statement or concealing information in order to qualify for a school bond.

Sen. Cherry’s bill changes the Code of Criminal Procedure to list the offenses as Class F felonies against the public trust with a maximum prison term of four years. Her legislation was part of a larger package of bills that created the School Loan Revolving Fund, which adds \$80 million to the School Aid Fund. The new School Loan Revolving Fund will assist schools in improving their infrastructure.

“We must protect school funds and make sure the money is used for what it is intended,” Sen. Cherry said. “My goal is to assure parents and educators that public assets will be protected and that those who defraud the public will pay for their crimes.”

The bill package was supported by Gov. Granholm who is expected to sign them into law soon. One of the many changes the package will make is requiring the State Treasurer to pre-qualify new bonds only if it is determined that the issuance of new bonds would not prevent a school district from repaying outstanding qualified loans on time.

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Sen. Deborah Cherry is a first-term Democrat from Burton, Michigan. She serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee, where she sits on the Higher Education, Department of Community Health, Department of Natural Resources and Capital Outlay subcommittees